

## KOTALIPARA BOMB PLOT HC to deliver verdict Feb 17

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court will deliver its verdict on February 17 on the case filed for attempting to kill Awami League leader and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina by planting a 76kg bomb at Kotalipara in 2000.

The HC bench of Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim and Justice Md Badruzzaman yesterday fixed the date after concluding hearing on the death reference (lower court documents) and appeals of the convicts against the lower court judgement on them.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin, Additional Attorney General Sheikh Md Morshed and Deputy Attorney General Dr Md Bashir Ullah appeared for the state while Amulya Kumar Sarker placed arguments as state defence lawyer for the absconding convicts. Lawyers SM Shahjahan, Mohammad Ahsan and Mohammad Nasiruddin stood for the convicts in jail.

During hearing, Attorney General AM Amin Uddin prayed to the HC to uphold the trial court verdict saying that the convicted accused have committed a very serious and unpardonable offence.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Dancers clad in red and white perform in front of Sylhet Central Shaheed Minar with flower garlands in hand to pay respect to the martyrs of the 1952 language movement. Sammilito Natya Parishad held a rally yesterday in Sylhet city, marking the first day of February, a significant month in Bangladesh's history. Mayor Ariful Haque Chowdhury attended the rally among citizens from all walks of life.

PHOTO: SHEKH NASIR

SUB-INSPECTORS, CONSTABLES

## PHQ to revamp their recruitment process

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Men under the height of 5 feet 6 inches and women under 5 feet 4 inches will not be able to qualify for the post of sub-inspector as some changes in the recruitment criteria for the lower tier of police force is in the offing.

Police Headquarters (PHQ) has already proposed to the home ministry to implement the changes in the existing recruitment regulation of sub-inspector, sergeant and constable posts.

As of now, the minimum height requirement for men applying to the SI post is 5 feet 4 inches and for women it is 5 feet 2 inches.

The recruitment and career planning unit of PHQ proposed the changes following a meeting of the police and home ministry high-ups at the home ministry in mid-2020.

Since SI and sergeants play key roles in case investigations, maintaining law and order, and providing security to VIP and VVIPs, importance should be given on intellect and psychological aspects, alongside educational qualifications in recruitment for the posts, said officials at PHQ.

As per the PHQ proposal, candidates applying to the posts of SI and sergeant will need to have knowledge in Information and Communication Technology.

They will also have to face tougher physical endurance tests and psychological tests compared to the existing ones, said officials at PHQ.

PHQ proposed to reduce the percentage of viva and aptitude test marks for SI posts to 50 from the existing 100 for fairer assessment of candidates.

There will be no change in the marking of viva and aptitude test for sergeant posts, which is now scored on 50 points.

SI and sergeant candidates will have to take stringent endurance tests like sit-ups, push-up and dragging along with the existing ones -- running, long jump, high jump and roping -- to ensure recruitment of fitter candidates.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## Lack of press freedom not good for the govt, country

JP lawmaker Anisul Islam Mahmud tells House

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two lawmakers from Jatiya Party and BNP yesterday in parliament criticised the government for "not having rule of law" in the country.

Participating in the thanksgiving motion on the President's speech, Jatiya Party MP Anisul Islam Mahmud said lack of interest in votes among people has been created in the recent times, which is not good for the country's democracy. The government should look into the matter seriously.

The Jatiya Party MP said voter turnout in the election has come down to 24 percent. People's disinterest in vote is not a good sign for democracy.

"Freedom of the press is another pillar of democracy. Failure to ensure freedom of the press is not good for the country or the government," he said.

Anisul said if the rule of law cannot be established in the country, development cannot be sustained.

"Only enactment of law is not enough;

people want to see implementation of laws. Otherwise, injustice will not stop."

Pointing to the sentencing of Bangladeshi lawmaker Mohammad Shahid Islam alias Papul in jail by Kuwait government on charges of money laundering and human trafficking, the Anisul questioned how the money was laundered from Bangladesh.

"Democracy is the strongest pillar of the spirit of independence. And the biggest pillar of democracy is elections. Today, questions have been raised about the Election Commission," Anisul also said.

"Looting is taking place in the country in the name of development," BNP MP Harunur Rashid exclaimed in his speech at the parliament.

"Money is being laundered. The local government system has been destroyed," he added.

Harun also criticised the opposition Jatiya Party, saying "there is no differences between the ruling party and the opposition has they have become united."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## HC issues status quo on land filling in Chengti Khal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued an order of status quo regarding the land filling of Chengti Khal in Maona area in Gazipur for a month.

In response to a writ petition, the HC also ordered the deputy commissioner of Gazipur and assistant commissioner of land of Sreepur upazila to conduct a survey on the canal and submit the report to this court in 30 days.

Besides, the court issued a rule asking the authorities concerned of the government to explain in four weeks why their inaction to stop land filling in Chengti Khal should not be declared illegal.

In the rule, the HC also asked the authorities to show causes for why they should not be directed to remove the soil already dumped into the canal in order to restore its original shape.

The HC bench of Justice Md Ashrafur Islam and Justice Mohammad Ali came up with the order and rule following a writ petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) challenging the earth filling in Chengti Khal. Deputy Attorney General Abdullah Al Mahmud Bashar represented the state during the hearing.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

ROAD CRASH COMPENSATION CLAIM

## Make the trustee board functional: Jatri Kalyan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity yesterday demanded that the government make the trustee board functional immediately which will deal with compensation related issues after accidents.

The passenger welfare body also demanded to set Tk 20 lakh as compensation for families of the deceased victims of road accidents and Tk 5 lakh for injured.

Mozammel Hoque Chowdhury, secretary general of the organisation, placed the demands at a press conference at Crime Reporters Association of Bangladesh.

More than two years after the Road Transport Act-2018 was passed in parliament, the government in December last year has appointed a chairman and a secretary for the trustee board that is supposed to deal with compensation-related issues after accidents.

Yet, the board cannot function as it is supposed to since the rules for it have not yet been formulated.

Road accidents victims will have to wait until the rules are formulated and approved by the government before they can get compensation. They can seek compensation but these will not be processed before the board is fully functional.

Under the Motor Vehicles Ordinance-1983, victims or their family members had the opportunity to seek compensation at the Motor Accident Claim Tribunal for death, injuries, and damage to properties.

But the ordinance was repealed after the act came into force in November 2019, narrowing victims' scope for getting compensation. In some cases, victims can now file writ petitions with the High Court to get compensation.

In this situation, the ministry on December 22 last year issued a circular, giving BRTA's chairman and its secretary additional duty of the chairman and secretary of the trustee board with immediate effect.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

ZAKAT FUND EMBEZZLEMENT

## Sayedee seeks stay on trial proceedings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Convicted war criminal Delawar Hossain Sayedee has filed a revision petition with the High Court challenging the lower court order that framed charges against him in a case filed for embezzling Tk 1.27 crore from Islamic Foundation's Zakat Fund.

Sayedee, a Jamaat-e-Islami leader, submitted the revision petition through lawyer Md Muzahedul Islam Shahin on Sunday seeking stay on the trial proceedings of the case against him.

Citing the petition, lawyer Muzahedul Islam Shahin told The Daily Star yesterday that there is no evidence against Sayedee of transacting and embezzling any money from Islamic Foundation's Zakat fund and there was no mention of his name in the first information report and charge sheet of the case.

Investigation Officer Wazed Ali Gazi has recorded statements from 25 witnesses of the case who did not mention the name of Sayedee, he said, adding that the embezzlement case was filed against him to harass him.

Muzahedul Islam said the HC is yet to fix any date for holding hearing on the petition.

On January 11, a Dhaka court framed charges against Sayedee and five others in the case. Islamic Foundation's finance and accounting director Aiyub Ali Chowdhury filed the case with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station on May 24, 2010.

Wazed Ali Gazi, an assistant director of the Anti-Corruption Commission, filed the charge sheet on April 30, 2012.

Sayedee, now in Kashimpur jail-1, has been convicted for life until death for crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

## Preliminary exam of 43rd BCS on Aug 6

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Preliminary examination of the 43rd Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) will be held on August 6, Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) said yesterday.

The test will be held simultaneously in Dhaka, Chattogram, Rajshahi, Barishal, Khulna, Sylhet, Rangpur and Mymensingh centres, said a press release from BPSC.

Information regarding the exam venue, seat plan and other instructions will be available on www.bpsc.gov.bd.

On January 27, BPSC extended the deadline till 6pm on March 31 for applicants, from January 31.

This was announced after University Grants Commission requested BPSC last week to extend the deadline, as many final semester students would not be able to apply for one of the most sought-after recruitment exams as their university exams could not take place during the pandemic.

In a letter, UGC said all educational institutions have been closed since March 18 last year. As such, honour's and master's exams were not held as per schedule.

Through the general 43rd BCS, 1,814 officials will be recruited, including 300 in public administration, 100 in police, 25 in foreign services, and 843 in teaching.



The cold is biting, the fog is blinding, but there's still an everlasting charm to a Bangladeshi winter morning. But maybe this is only for the onlookers' eyes, because it cannot be easy navigating the Turag river on a tiny boat in such circumstances. This photo was taken from Gabtoli portion of the river yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



Human hauler operators using megaphones to invite passengers in is a whole new level of noise nuisance in the capital that is already struggling with every kind of urban pollution. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Sheikh Hasina medical univ be to set up in Khulna

Bill passed in parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A bill titled "Sheikh Hasina Medical University, Khulna Bill, 2021" was passed in parliament yesterday to set up a medical university in Khulna division, aiming to expand the facilities for medical education, research and healthcare services in the region.

Health Minister Zahid Maleque placed the bill which was passed unanimously through voice vote.

According to the objective of the bill, it is essential to set up a medical university in Khulna division to create postgraduate physicians and medical researchers as well as improve the quality of education at medical colleges in the region.

The proposed law has been formulated keeping similarities with the laws of Rajshahi, Chattogram and Sylhet medical universities.

The president will be the chancellor of the proposed medical university. All government and private medical, dental and nursing colleges and other institutes related to medical education in Khulna division will be affiliated to the university.

In the bill, research, higher education and the standards of healthcare services and expansion of the facilities were given special importance.

The move came as part of the government's plan to set up a medical university in each division of the country.

On January 19, the bill was placed in parliament which was sent to the parliamentary standing committee on the health ministry for further scrutiny. On September 21, 2020, the cabinet approved the draft.

Speaking on the bill, several MPs including BNP's Harunur Rashid, Rumin Farhana, Jatiya Party's Rowshan Ara Mannan said the health minister has failed to stop widespread corruption and irregularities in the health sector.

## DHAKA WANDERERS CLUB HC seeks audit report, names of committee members

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday sought for the constitution, audit report and lists of committee members of Dhaka Wanderers Club which was allegedly linked to casino business.

The HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Mohi Uddin Shamim passed the order during the hearing of six bail petitions filed by Joy Gopal Sarkar, general secretary of the club, in connection with six money laundering cases against him.

The court asked Joy's lawyers to produce the documents before it today for examination.

His lawyer Quamrul Islam told the HC that they have all the relevant documents regarding Dhaka Wanderers Club in hand, Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin told The Daily Star.

Joy was arrested on July 14 last year in connection with five money laundering cases filed with different police stations in Dhaka on different dates in 2019 and 2020.

He was sued in another case filed with Bangshal Police Station on August 31 last year, Amin added.